

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0916
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ALEXANDRIA 0587

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

FOLLOWING FROM AMBASSADOR IN ALEXANDRIA

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (JAVITS, JACOB)
SUBJECT: CODEL JAVITS - MEETING WITH SAYID MAR'I, SPEAKER OF
PEOPLES ASSEMBLY

SUMMARY: SENATOR JAVITS AND SPEAKER MAR'I HAD FRANK EXCHANGE
OF VIEWS OVER DINNER IN ALEXANDRIA JULY 9. MAR'I DESCRIBED RECENT
MURDER OF FORMER MINISTER AS ATTEMPT BY EXTREMIST MUSLIN GROUP TO
FRIGHTEN ISLAMIC PROGRESSIVES. SENATOR URGED THAT ECONOMIC PLAN
BE DEVELOPED AND CITED CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN ON THIS SUBJECT.
IN MIDDLE EAST CONTEXT, SENATOR PREDICTED POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO
SINAI AND GOLAN PROBLEMS, BUT WARNED THAT WEST BANK REPRESENTS
VITAL PROBLEM FOR ISRAEL. ISRAELIS COULD NOT ACCEPT PLO, NOR
INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE. MAR'I EMPHASIZED ARAB READINESS
FOR NEGOTIATIONS, OBSERVED CRUCIAL QUESTION IS ISRAELI ATTITUDE;
NORMALIZATION WOULD FOLLOW NATURALLY ON CONCLUSION OF PEACE.

1. SENATOR JAVITS, ACCOMPANIED BY LAKELAND AND AMBASSADOR, HAD
TWO AND ONE HALF HOUR MEETING/DINNER CONVERSATION WITH SAYID MAR'I,
PEOPLES ASSEMBLY SPEAKER, IN ALEXANDRIA ON JUNE 9. ASHRAF GHORBAL,
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GOE AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, WAS ALSO PRESENT. SENATOR EXPRESSED
HIGH PRAISE OF AMBASSADOR GHORBAL FOR HIS ROLE IN SUCCESSFUL
NEGOTIATIONS WITH HANAFI MUSLIMS DURING RECENT TERRORIST ATTACK IN
WASHINGTON. HE DESCRIBED GHORBAL AS WASHINGTON'S HERO, WHO HAD
OFFERED HIS SERVICE DESPITE OBVIOUS POSSIBLE THREAT TO HIS SAFETY.
GHORBAL LINKED HANAFI INCIDENT TO CASE OF FORMER EGYPTIAN MINISTER
WHO WAS KIDNAPPED AND MURDERED LAST WEEK IN CAIRO BY EXTERMIST

MUSLIM GROUP. SPEAKER MARI NOTED THAT SUCH GROUPS ARE CAUSING PROBLEMS DURING WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS "TRANSITION PHASE" THROUGH WHICH EGYPT IS NOW PASSING. EGYPT, UNDER SADAT, IS TRYING TO APPLY DEMOCRATIC METHODS, BUT IN PROCESS IS EXPOSING ITSELF TO EXTREMES ON BOTH LEFT -ND RIGHT. HE NOTED NASSER HAD DEALT SEVERELY WITH THESE ELEMENTS WHEN THEY THREATENED HIM; GOE, HOWEVER, CANNOT DO SO AND STILL MAINTAIN MOMENTUM OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL REFORMS. TIME HAS COME, MARI SAID, WHEN PEOPLES ASSEMBLY MUST ACT, WHILE PUBLIC OPINION IS HIGH, AGAINST SUCH TERRORISTS. HE SUGGESTED LAW TO ASSURE "PROTECTION OF THE SOCIETY".

2. REGARDING MOTIVES OF THE GROUP, MARI SAID THEY HAD CHOSE DHAHABI (SHEIKH MUHAMMAD HUSSEIN AL-DHAHABI, FORMER WAR MINISTER) AS VICTIM BECAUSE HE WAS A VERY QUIET, RELIGIOUS MAN. HE WAS NOT SUCCESSFUL AS A MINISTER BECAUSE OF HIS LACK OF DYNAMISM. THE MURDER WAS NOT POLITICAL ACT; THEY AVOIDED CHOOSING A POLITICAL FIGURE. RATHER THEY STARTED WITH DHAHABI AS A WARNING TO FRIGHTEN THOSE WHO ARE CHANGING OR MODERNIZING ISLAM. THEY ARE AGAINST ISLAM AS IT IS BEING TAUGHT AT AL-AZHAR. MARI NOTED THAT MEMBERS OF THE GROUP ARE UNDER 25 AND THAT THEY ARE INTELLECTUALS. HE SAID THEIR NAME, TAKFIR WA HEGRA, IS THE SAME AS A SIMILARLY ZEALOUS GROUP WHICH IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY HAD PLANNED THE MURDERS OF ALI BIN TALIB AND MU'AWIA (EARLY ISLAMIC LEADERS, BECAUSE OF THEIR DEVIATION FROM ISLAM. DHAHABI MURDER HAD VERY MUCH WORRIED EGYPTIANS BECAUSE THEY REMEMBER PREVIOUS INCIDENTS WHICH LED TO MORE BLOODSHED. ASSASSINATION OF MINISTER OF INTERIOR BY MUSLIM

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BROTHERHOOD IN 1940'S HAD LED TO THE MURDER OF THE MUSLIM BROTHER FOUNDER HASSAN AL-BANNA.

3. SENATOR SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE POINT FORCIBLY REGARDING NEED FOR EGYPT TO PREPARE ECONOMIC PLAN. SPEAKING AS SENATOR TO PARLIAMENTARIAN, HE TOLD MARI THAT EGYPT MIGHT HAVE MORE RELIABLE SOURCE OF ASSISTANCE, CAUTIONING HIM NOT TO EXPORT MORE, IF A PLAN WHICH COULD PASS ANALYSIS WERE AVAILABLE. MARI NOTED THAT DEPPRIMIN KAISOUNI HAD PLEDGED SUCH A PLAN DURING HIS RECENT REPORT TO ASSEMBLY. ROUGH FRAMEWORK EXISTS (MARI WAS REFERRING TO THE EGYPTIAN POLICY STATEMENT AT THE IBRD MEETING IN PARIS IN MAY, 1977) BUT NOT ONE WHICH WOULD STAND ANALYSIS SENATOR EMPHASIZED PLAN SHOULD SHOW WHERE EGYPT IS GOING.

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ACTION SS-25

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4. MAR'I NOTED THAT PROBLEMS ARE WELL KNOWN, BUT ASKED HOW INTELLIGENT PLAN COULD BE DRAWN UP IF THERE IS NO SECURITY OF INCOME. HE REITERATED HIS CALL FOR SOMETHING LIKE AN ARAB MARSHALL PLAN FOR EGYPT. SENATOR ACKNOWLEDGED NEED FOR BASIC ASSUMPTIONS IN DRAWING UP PLAN, BUT NOTED SUCH ASSUMPTIONS SHOULD BE CONSERVATIVE WHILE GOALS SHOULD BE AMBITIOUS. REGARDING AID FROM ARABS, MAR'I SAID HE NOT SATISFIED WITH GOE'S CURRENT APPROACH; TOO MUCH DEPENDS ON PERSONAL CONTACT. HE ALLUDED TO AN ECONOMIC UNDERSTANDING WITH LATE KING FAISAL TO PROVIDE CONTINUITY OF FUNDS, WHICH WAS REACHED IN ASWAN IN JAN 1975; THEN PRIME MINISTER HEGAZI HAD, HOWEVER, REJECTED IT. ACCORDING TO MAR'I EGYPT NEEDS TWO BILLION DOLLARS FROM THE ARABS YEARLY, IN ADDITION TO OTHER ASSISTANCE. HE AGREED PLAN WOULD BE BENEFICIAL AND OBSERVED THAT ONE ENDORSED BY U.S. WOULD BE EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE. THIS WOULD BE HELPFUL TO CONVINCE THE SAUDIS TO CONTINUE TO ASSIST. FINALLY, HE NOTED THAT EGYPT HAS SOCIAL PROBLEMS NOT FACED BY SAUDI ARABIA WHICH MAKE COMPLIANCE WITH SOME TERMS DIFFICULT. SENATOR AGAIN EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR DESCRIBING DIRECTIONS OF THE ECONOMY AND NOTED AS EVIDENCE OF CONCERN IN CONGRESS ON THIS POINT INCLUSION OF REQUIREMENT FOR ECONOMIC STUDY IN RECENTLY PASSED FOREIGN ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION.

5. SENATOR THEN RECALLED HIS RECENT STATEMENT ON "PENDULUM SWING IN AMERICAN POLICY" AND SAID THAT HIS INTENTION WAS TO STOP FURTHER
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PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS ON SPECIFICS OF A MIDEAST PEACE SETTLEMENT PRIOR TO BEGIN VISIT. HE SAID HE FELT HE HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN THIS OBJECTIVE; THE LONG TERM DEBATE IN THE U.S. WILL CONTINUE. BEGIN, MUST HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE HIS DAY. HE SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND AGREEMENT EVERYWHERE THAT TIME IS RIGHT FOR SETTLEMENT AND EMPHASIZED THAT IF THERE IS DETERMINATION PEACE MAY BE POSSIBLE. AS AN EXAMPLE HE SAID THAT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO ISRAEL, HARDLY ANYONE HAD MENTIONED AS A PRECONDITION THE NECESSITY FOR FACE-TO-

FACE NEGOTIATIONS. SENATOR SAID HE IS NOT HOPEFUL, BUT HE IS ALSO NOT PESSIMISTIC.

6. MAR'I SAID HE IS WORRIED. WHILE HE AGREES TIME IS RIGHT, HE IS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT STATEMENTS COMING FROM ISRAEL. GENEVA IS NOT VALID UNLESS IT LEADS TO SOMETHING; IT IS NOT A GOAL IN ITSELF. IF THERE ARE POSITIVE RESULTS, THEN CONCEPT OF PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS IS VALID.

7. SENATOR ASKED WHAT ARABS PREPARED TO GIVE UP IF ISRAEL WITHDRAWS FROM ARAB TERRITORY. HE SAID ISRAELIS CONCERNED ESPECIALLY ABOUT WITHDRAWAL FROM THE WEST BANK. THIS IS OVERRIDING SECURITY CONSIDERATION FOR THEM. THEY VIEW CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE AS POSING A MORTAL SECURITY THREAT TO ISRAEL. SENATOR ALSO SAID FORCEFULLY THAT ISRAEL WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE PLO OR AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE ON THE WEST BANK. THE PLO REPRESENTS DESTRUCTIVE, IRRESPONSIBLE ELEMENTS SENATOR ADDED. HE FORSEES RELATIVELY EASY SOLUTION FOR SINAI AND THE GOLAN. INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE, HOWEVER, CANNOT BE ACCEPTED. HE SAID THAT EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO FIND ANOTHER SOLUTION FOR WEST BANK PERHAPS AS PART OF JORDAN. ON THE WEST BANK, SENATOR REMARKED THAT HE WAS PLEASED THAT HE HAD HEARD NO ADVERSE COMMENTS ON FAIRNESS OF THE WEST BANK ELECTIONS DURING HIS VISIT.

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8. ADDRESSING HIMSELF TO ISRAELI FEARS OF A HOSTILE PALESTINIAN STATE, GHORBAL OBSERVED THAT ARABS HAVE STAKE IN ASSURING THAT PEACE WITH ISRAEL IS PERMANENT. ARABS DO NOT WANT TO LAY ANOTHER TRAP WHICH WILL LEAD TO WAR. NOTING PRESIDENT CARTER'S RECENT STATEMENTS ON WITHDRAWAL AND NORMALIZATION, MAR'I OBSERVED THAT ARABS ARE READY FOR NEGOTIATIONS; HOWEVER, CRUCIAL FACTOR IS ISRAELI READINESS. THIS IS IMPORTANCE OF BEGIN VISIT TO WASHINGTON, I.E. TO ASSESS ISRAELI READINESS.

9. CONVERSATION THEN TURNED TO CONCEPT OF NORMALIZATION. AMBASSADOR NOTED EVOLUTION IN SADAT'S THINKING FROM DECLARATIONS THAT PEACE FOR HIS GENERATION WOULD BE ENOUGH AND FURTHER STEPS TOWARD NORMALIZATION WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE, TO HIS STATEMENT IN WASHINGTON THAT HE WILLING TO HAVE NORMAL EXCHANGES (EXCEPT TRADE) WITHIN FIVE YEARS AFTER PEACE AGREEMENT SIGNED. MAR'I NOTED PART OF PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION IS CHANGE WHICH IS TAKING PLACE IN PLO, MODERATION OF LEADERS IS IMPORTANT POINT. ONCE PEACE IS ESTABLISHED, MAR'I SAID, NORMALIZATION WILL FOLLOW NATURALLY. HE EQUATED PEACE WITH NORMALIZATION IN THIS SENSE.

10. COMMENT: MEETING WITH MAR'I AND GHORBAL WAS EXTREMELY CORDIAL AT SAME TIME EXCHANGES WERE FRANK, AND AT TIMES THERE WERE UNDERSTANDABLE DISAGREEMENTS. BOTH EGYTIANS AND CODEL AGREED

THAT TIME IS RIPE FOR PEACE AND THAT PEACE IS BADLY NEEDED IN
REGION AT THIS TIME. SESSION CLEARLY FURTHERED REALISTIC DIALOGUE
OF ESSENTIALS OF PEACE A DIALOGUE THAT IS NEEDED AT THIS EXPECTANT
TIME FOR BOTH SIDES.

11. ABOVE APPROVED BY CODEL.
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